
Stabilizing Collections in the Aftermath of a Disaster

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No One Expects



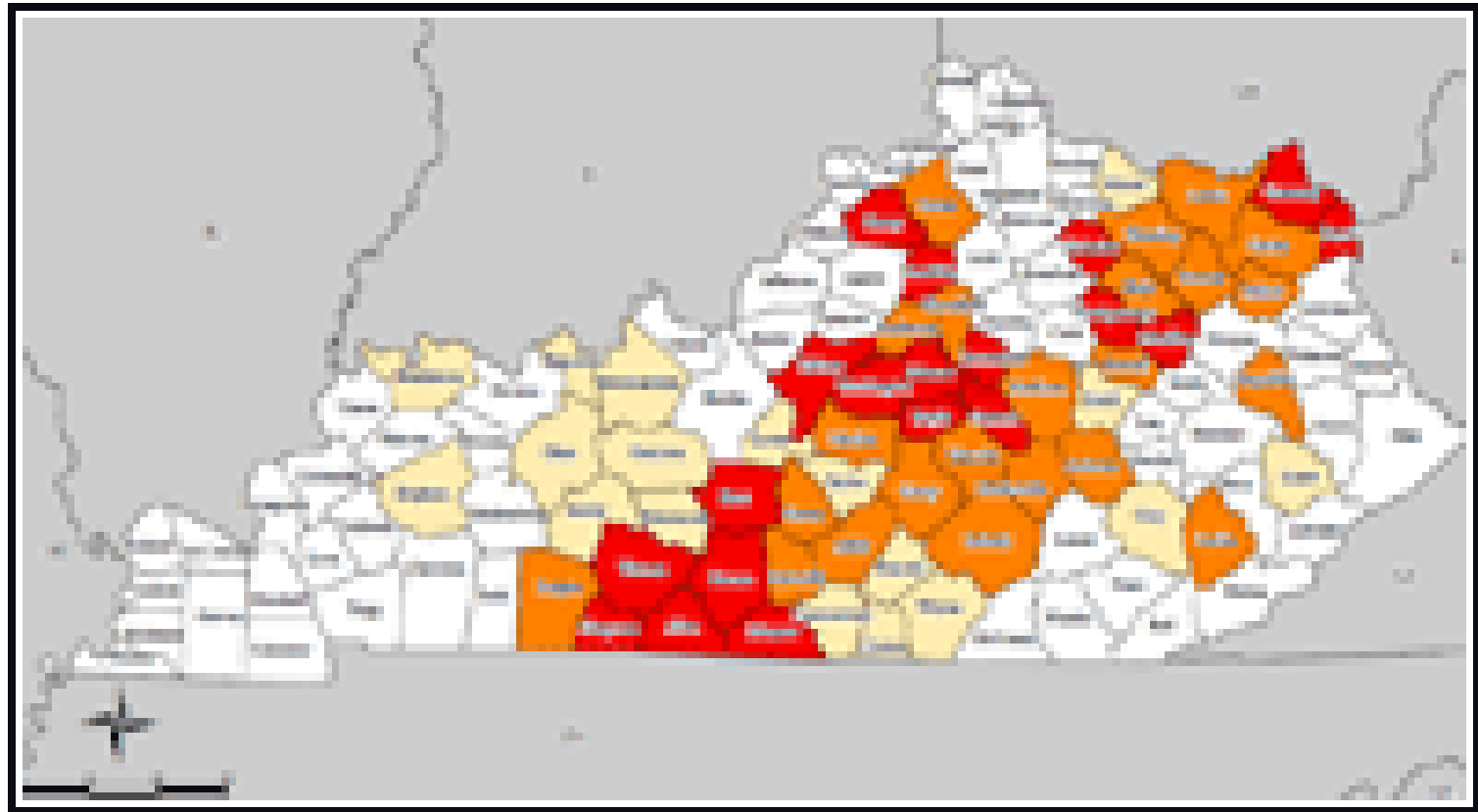
Exploding sewers!



Yuck!



Kentucky disaster counties, May 2010



Alaska State Archives, Juneau, 2009

- **Monday August 17**
 - construction bubble ripped off the roof during the previous night.
 - Head of Archives was on vacation, Records Manager discovered the flood at 7am. There was a ¼" puddle headed for the electrical panel and people walking in the water. Safety hazard.
 - Centennial Hall was called but was unable to give space. On day 4, they offered their space but it was not needed by then. Head of Alaska State Library – Historical Collections (ASL-HC) secured the Juneau Arts and Culture Center (JACC) around 8 or 9am. There was a pre-existing verbal agreement with the JACC director to use the space in an emergency.
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-



Who do you partner with?

First responders

Historic house museums

City clerks

Churches

Chambers of commerce

Businesses and corporations


Academia

Internal partners

Red Cross

PTA

Regional preservation groups



Integrating Historic Property and Cultural Resource Considerations Into Hazard Mitigation Planning

State and Local Mitigation Planning How-To Guide

FEMA 386-6 / May 2005

STATE AND LOCAL MITIGATION PLANNING how-to guide: Historic Properties and Cultural Resources

Date: *JANUARY 8, 2007*

step 3

Worksheet #3

Inventory Historic Property and Cultural Resource Assets (page 3 of 3)

phase 2

Back up your data



In Desk Set, office manager Kate Hepburn suffers from computerphobia, but only her hairpin can save EMERAC and efficiency expert Spencer Tracy's job.

LOCKSS

- Lots of Copies
Keep Stuff Safe
-

Plan with your insurer

- **YOU HAVE FINE ART!**

Not used paper!

- **What to talk about:**

- Back up for accessions and paperwork

What is a total loss?

Replacement cost or recovery cost?

What can you do before an adjuster arrives?

Set Your Priorities:

ALWAYS people first!

- Accession register, catalog, databases
- Items on loan
- Collections that best support your institutional mission
- Items most prone to damage if not treated
- Items least damaged

Collections that are :

Unique	3	1	2
Heavily used	1	3	1
Least replaceable	3	1	2
Most valuable	3	2	3
Research value	3	2	3
	<hr/> 13	<hr/> 9	<hr/> 11

General rules

- Plan ahead and rehearse your plans
 - Talk to your insurer ahead of time, and talk to vendors
 - Don't store your supplies in the basement
 - Don't wade in the water
 - Don't touch soot or ash
 - Don't pick anything up without noting where it was and knowing where it will go. Don't walk backwards
 - Turn the heat DOWN!
 - Water weighs 8 pounds a gallon
-

Artwork

- Keep paintings on the stretchers
 - Keep them paint-side-up, on blocks, touching nothing
 - Remove the frames in a dry safe place
 - Call a conservator
 - Don't freeze
-

Photographs

- Don't freeze dags or glass plate negatives
 - Rinse, don't dry or blot
 - Don't touch the image surfaces
 - Dry on a line or flat absorbent surface, or
 - Keep in cold water up to 48 hours, or
 - Interleave and freeze
-

Textiles

- Support them when you move them
 - Don't stack or unfold wet textiles
 - Rinse, block, and reshape
 - If textiles can't be dried in 48 hours, interleave and freeze
-

Furniture

- Rinse, gently blot, and air dry slowly
 - If paint blisters or peels, don't touch it
 - Use weights over pads to hold veneers
 - Remove upholstered parts and blot or wrap in clean cloth
 - Don't freeze, don't heat
-

Inorganics

- If a ceramic is broken or cracked, seal it in a bag and watch for mold
 - Call a conservator
 - Wear gloves when handling metal
 - Rinse and air dry
-

Organics

- Rinse and blot. Air dry
 - Stuff to keep the shape of baskets and leather
 - Manipulate leather often
 - Freeze if needed
-

Books and Paper

- Rinse books while holding them closed
 - Stand damp books on end and let air dry, lay wet ones flat
 - Interleave wet glossy paper books
 - Don't unfold or separate wet paper
 - Interleave and air dry in 1/4" stacks
 - Wrap in wax paper and freeze if needed
-

Paper will take much more room after the disaster



You need space – lots of it



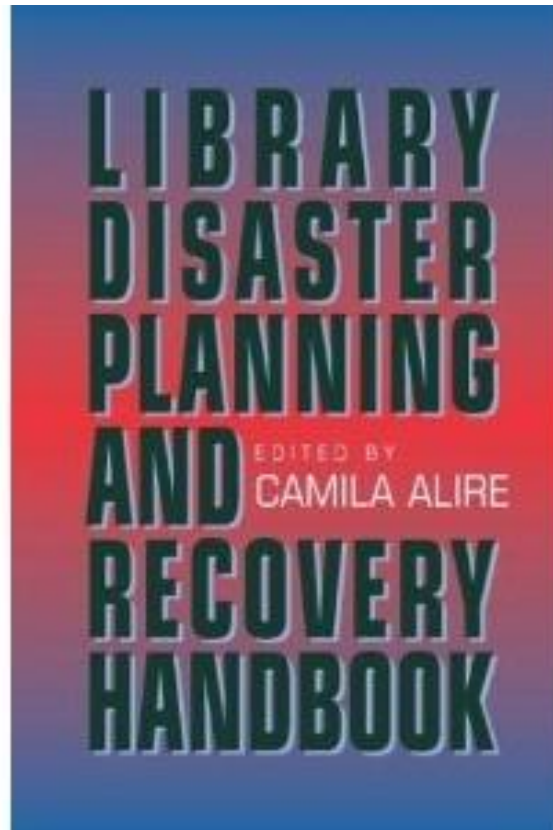
Historic buildings

- Call an engineer and FEMA
 - Don't pump out water before talking to an engineer – the foundation could collapse
 - Remove non-historic materials of all kinds
 - Support plaster with plywood and wood T braces
 - Inventory found items and save
 - Air dry – never use heat
-

Media

- Rinse and air dry
 - Never wipe dry
 - Never freeze
 - Copy as soon as possible
 - Don't worry about recovering things that are easily replaced
-

Library Disaster Planning and Recovery Handbook, Camila Alire



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Tuesday August 18

- · ASM Curator lined up a refrigeration van from AML barge lines, awaiting approval from administration.
 - · 4pm, 200+ more wet boxes were discovered when the emergency is about 52 hours old.
-

Wednesday , August 19

- Refrigeration van ordered by State Records Manager, needs special power source and is driven to the barge line to be plugged in

- Friday August 21

- Humidity strips ordered from Talas, they shipped them ground by accident. Arrive the following Thursday

Debriefing:

- Although there was leadership, people were still confused about who was in charge. Some volunteers left when they could not find someone to give them direction.
 - Having a laptop with Archives database Minisis on it would have been nice.
 - Document safety: Records with confidentiality issues are being dried in a unsecure office. Someone needed to stay with papers in SOB atrium until building was locked each night.
 - Wet documents put into dry boxes for transport had a star drawn on the lid, but many people did not know what the star meant.
-

More Debriefing

- Fans are loud and create an annoying breeze. People are getting hoarse from shouting over them.
 - More first aid kits needed for paper cuts, staple wounds etc.
 - Fanning out folder contents with folders on the bottom promotes drying, but you must counteract blow-away. Leaving staples, paper clips etc on helps (and then discard those fasteners to make it easier to put folders into boxes.) Weight the papers. Improvised weights included nuts & bolts, pellet gun shot, sand, cat litter etc put in ziplock bags or envelopes taped shut, clean plastic bottles, or small Tupperware containers.
 - Wet feet will freeze to floor of the van
 - In general, it is good practice not to leave boxes on the floor at the end of a workday
-

Web site

- Links to all the sites and brochures I mentioned.
 - <http://sites.google.com/site/libraryandarchiveresources/disaster-planning-and-recovery>
 - Also our home page, with more links.
 - <http://www.masterplansinc.com/mp%20links.htm>
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Hands-on training

